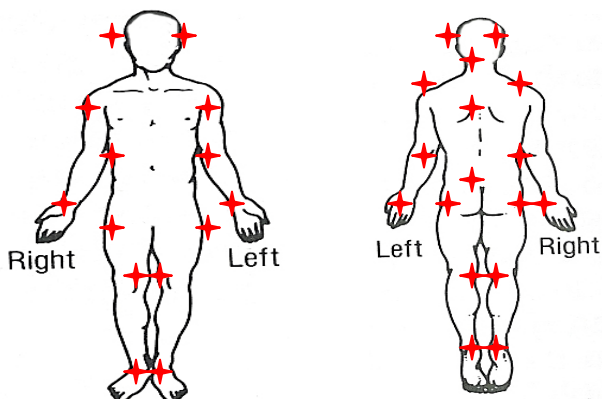


## TOP TIPS FOR PREVENTING PRESSURE ULCERS

- ◆ To reduce pressure on any one body part; shift your body often, so that it is in a new position. If you cannot do it, ask for help.
- ◆ Avoid lying for long periods of time on bony areas such as your hip.
- ◆ Keep skin clean and dry. Use skin lotion as necessary.
- ◆ Avoid dragging your skin on the bed.
- ◆ Protect your skin from urine and stool by using a skin protectant. Ask your health care provider for recommendations.
- ◆ Eat a healthy diet and drink plenty of fluids.
- ◆ Do not rub bony, reddened areas.

### BONY AREAS



## WHAT DO I DO IF I ALREADY HAVE A PRESSURE ULCER

- ◆ Keep the pressure ulcer and/or skin area clean.
- ◆ Avoid lying on the pressure ulcer.
- ◆ Change dressings and apply medicine as prescribed by your doctor or health care team.
- ◆ Contact your health care provider if there are any changes in the pressure ulcer such as:
  - foul smelling
  - pain
  - too much drainage
  - change in color

PRESSURE ULCER WOUND CARE TEAM  
 STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK  
 DOWNSTATE MEDICAL CENTER  
 UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL OF BROOKLYN

445 LENOX ROAD  
 BROOKLYN, NY 11203  
 (718) 270-1000  
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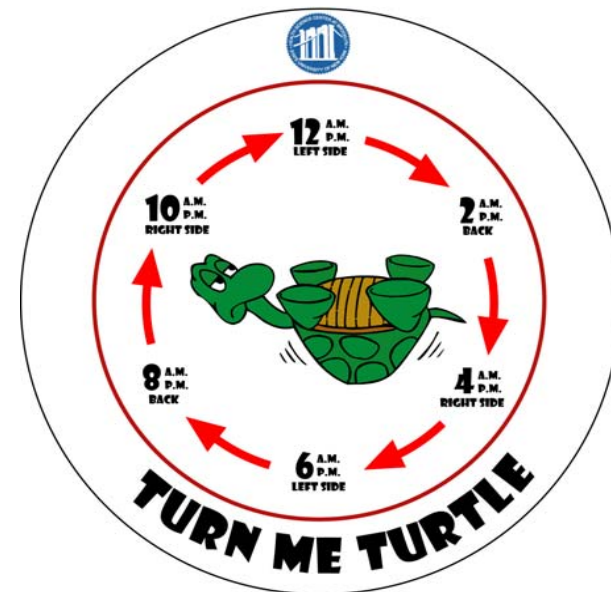
APPROVED BY:  
 PATIENT AND FAMILY EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
 2009 Revised 2012



SUNY  
**Downstate**  
 Medical Center

University Hospital of Brooklyn

## THE WHATS AND WHYS OF PRESSURE ULCERS



**Nobody wants to see a Turtle on its Back**

**Turtles are Precious - Our Skin is Precious**  
**Keep us off our Backs....Turn Me**

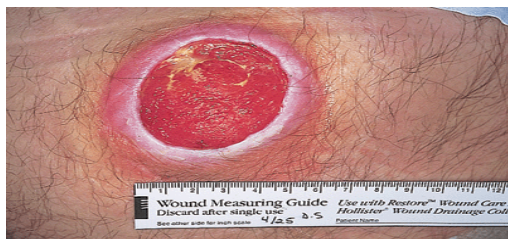
**IMPORTANT INFORMATION THAT PATIENTS AND FAMILIES NEED TO KNOW**

WOUND CARE TEAM OF UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL OF BROOKLYN  
 Tel: (718) 270-1000

## WHAT ARE PRESSURE ULCERS?

A PRESSURE ULCER or BED SORE is a change or break in the skin caused by constant pressure especially over a bony area.

A pressure ulcer can appear as a red area on the skin, a blister or an open sore.



## WHO IS AT RISK?

You may be at risk because:

- ◆ Pressure ulcers develop when a person stays too long in a position without moving.
- ◆ Blood flow to a body part is reduced so that the skin does not get enough nutrients.
- ◆ Pressure ulcers can develop when the body is rubbed, dragged or slid against a surface such as a bed sheet. This is referred to as friction / shearing, depending on the type of damage it causes.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

If you answer **“NO”** to ANY of the questions below, you may be at risk. Talk to your doctor and health care team about a plan to reduce the risk of developing a pressure ulcer.

- 1. Am I able to feel all parts of my body?** (If you cannot feel all parts of your body, then you cannot feel or sense discomfort or pain in areas where the pressure has cut off the blood flow to a body part).
- 2. Am I able to move all parts of my body?** (If you cannot move then you will be unable to take the pressure off a body part that is against a surface: bed / chair).
- 3. Is my skin moist but not too moist?** (Too much moisture on your skin especially from urine and sweat can cause the skin to break down easily).
- 4. Am I physically active?** (If you are able to walk regularly throughout the day then you have a lower risk in developing a pressure ulcer than someone who is confined to a bed or chair).
- 5. Am I eating a healthy diet?** (Poor nutrition contributes to the development of pressure ulcers).

## STEPS TO PRESSURE ULCER PREVENTION

Now that you know that you may be at risk, you and your health care team can begin to take steps to prevent the development of pressure ulcers.

- ◆ If you can move regularly, keep doing what you are doing – keep moving, eat well, and drink plenty of fluids.
- ◆ Identify areas that you can change such as eating better and doing more activity every day.
- ◆ Get help in areas where you need it, such as: if you cannot feel all parts of your body, set an alarm to sound frequently to remind yourself to move. If you cannot move yourself get assistance from others.
- ◆ Work with your health care provider to develop a Pressure Ulcer Prevention Plan.